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Ray Brothers Deny They Conspired in King Killing

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Compiled From Press Dispatches

WASHINGTON — James Earl Ray's brothers deny they conspired with him in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the House Assassinations Committee has disclosed no proof for its suggestion that they might have.

Jerry Ray denied to the committee yesterday that he is the mysterious "Raoul" James Earl Ray has implicated in the assassination. John Ray, according to his attorney, was to make the same denial today.

The attorney, James Lesar, indicated that John also would deny — as Jerry did yesterday — that the three brothers robbed an Alton, Ill., bank of $25,000 on July 13, 1967.

The committee said two weeks ago it believes money from that robbery helped finance James Earl's escape to Europe after King's assassination in Memphis April 4, 1968.

Committee investigator Mark Speiser warned Jerry Ray as he took the witness stand yesterday that the committee has information he may have been "a co-conspirator or otherwise involved" in King's assassination.

"You've uncovered evidence that I was involved?" Ray asked.

"We have received information which would suggest that you were involved in the assassination directly or indirectly or perhaps facilitated the means by which it took place," Speiser replied.

Chief Counsel G. Robert Blakey indicated the information is from witnesses who say that at key points before the assassination James Earl Ray told them of dealings with "my brother."

James Earl pleaded guilty to King's killing and is in prison but contends he is innocent. He says he was set up to take the blame by joining what he thought was only a gunrunning operation directed by Raoul.

But contrary to James Earl's claim that Raoul called him to Birmingham and then Memphis for what turned out to be King's assassination, Blakey said James Earl told witnesses at a bar he was called by "my brother."

Jerry Ray contended the truth is just the opposite: That James Earl always referred to Raoul as "my brother" to cover up the gunrunning operation.

Jerry was not asked about sworn statements by James Earl's onetime attorney, Percy Foreman, that James Earl told him Jerry was in Birmingham when James Earl bought the rifle allegedly used in the assassination.

Jerry has denied Foreman's allegation and says work records show he was at his job as a night watchman at an Illinois country club at the time.

During six hours of questioning punctuated with repeated objections from his attorneys, Jerry acknowledged he has lied to reporters and book writers and may have lied to the FBI.

At the conclusion of yesterday's hearing, Florynce Kennedy, one of two attorneys accompanying Ray, protested that after "grilling" him for hours the committee would allow Ray and them only five minutes to give their views.

"It is impossible to make any comprehensive response," she said.

Knoxville News-Sentinel

Ray's Brother Faces Committee

Jerry Ray, brother of James Earl Ray, appeared before the House Assassinations Committee to answer questions about evidence it says it has linking him to the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His attorney, Florynce Kennedy, right, objected to "speculative" remarks based on "circumstantial evidence," and demanded they be purged from the record. (UPI Telephoto).